

FOUNDATIONS

BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE 21ST CENTURY

FALL / WINTER 1998/1999 •

Neighborhood Development Division •

VOL. II ISSUE 2



Michael Shea Jackson, vice-president of the Westside New Pioneers CDC, introduces board members at their November 18th groundbreaking.

City of Las Vegas helps local group realize dream

Las Vegas (November 18, 1998)—The city's Old Westside echoed with a new sound recently, of hammers, saws, concrete mixers and shovels as ground was broken and work began on the first four of 13 new homes being built for lower-income homebuyers.

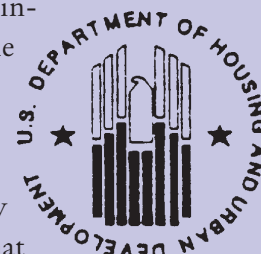
The homes, will occupy a stretch of land between Van Buren and Harrison Avenues and E and G Streets in Las Vegas's historic McWilliams Townsite, or Old Westside. The 13 homes will each have three bedrooms, two baths, and a two-car garage, and will be affordable to families earning 50 percent or less of the Las Vegas area median income, or \$24,750 for a family of four.

Dream continued on page 2

HUD's Budget and what it means for Las Vegas

Recently President Clinton approved the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's budget for the upcoming fiscal year, beginning July 1, 1999. The \$24.5 million budget represents an increase in funding for 6 key service delivery areas and ensures that the City's programs continue to improve housing and community services for our neighborhoods.

Community Development Block Grants. FY 1999 funding for CDBG is set at \$4.75 billion, up from the FY 1998 level of \$4.67 billion. The CDBG Program provides flexible federal assistance to help local governments carry out a wide range of community and economic development activities. CDBG funds are used to rehabilitate housing, improve public infrastructure, provide job training, finance revolving



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Habitat for Humanity focuses on Las Vegas

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Wells Fargo in the community

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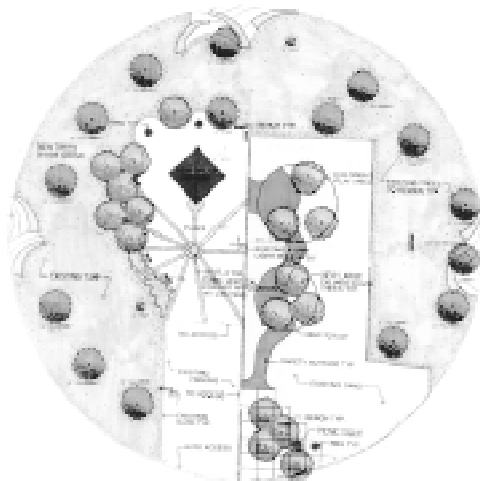
Lubertha Johnson Park to be renovated

The residents of the Vegas Heights neighborhood have joined with the City of Las Vegas to develop plans for the Vegas Heights Revitalization Project. Residents voiced their concerns for the revitalization of Lubertha Johnson Park making it a top priority.

The quaint circular neighborhood park that should be the focal point of the neighborhood is currently in desperate need of renovation. The park, once alive with activity and filled with children's laughter, family picnics, kickball games, and swings soaring in the air, is now silent.

The neighborhood has a vision for the park. With the City of Las Vegas as their partner, this vision will soon become a reality.

The City will replace the dilapidated metal playground equipment with new, state-of-the-art equipment installed on a special child-proof surface. Additional trees will be planted to create shaded picnic areas, and



The City's version of Lubertha Johnson Park.

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Dream - continued from page 1

The organization at the center of this project is the Westside New Pioneers, a local community development corporation (CDC) that is working diligently to rejuvenate West Las Vegas.

The City of Las Vegas is proud to be a partner in this worthwhile venture, allocating over \$135,000 in federal grants.

"Today, we celebrate the neighborhoods of Las Vegas, where committed residents have joined together with local business to transform vacant blocks and crime-ridden abandoned buildings into quality affordable homes for our hard-working families," Councilman Gary Reese said at the November 18th groundbreaking on Van Buren and G Street.

"We celebrate not only that these homes are being built, but that they are being built by neighbors for neighbors," Councilman Reese said. "With these homes, Las Vegas joins with hundreds of cities nationwide where neighborhood-based nonprofit developers—supported by local business and government—are creating new hope and new opportunity in communities long thought beyond repair."

The first phase of the project is scheduled to be completed mid-1999.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Rehab Program is changing lives

Ms. Esther Taylor is a 69-year-old retiree. She asked the Neighborhood Development Division for assistance in repairing her bathrooms at her residence. An inspection revealed that only one toilet was operable, neither one of



the showers nor the bathtub was working properly, and tile and dry-wall was falling off one of the shower walls. In addition, the shower pan was completely disintegrated, a new door and doorknob was required on one of the bathrooms, ground fault circuit interrupters were needed in both bathrooms, and the walls required painting.

Ms. Taylor was in obvious need of our help. Through the City's rehab program, the project was completed in three weeks and Ms. Taylor now has use of both bathrooms.

For those who work in the rehab program, this is typical of a single family home rehabilitation project. But for Ms. Taylor, the much-needed rehab made a world of difference.

For more information about the Neighborhood Services Rehab program, call Erik King at 229-6417.

Community Caring at the Homeless Stand Down

Sometimes during the holiday season, we forget how truly lucky we are. We take for granted those things that seem more like necessities than luxuries. But what if you didn't have a job? What if you didn't have a roof over your head or even reliable transportation?

This is the grim reality of approximately 10,000 people in the Las Vegas Valley. Many people have preconceived notions or stereotypes of homeless persons. Some people seem to believe that they could "pick out" a homeless person in a crowd by their appearance, their demeanor, or the way they talk. Not so.

In fact, many homeless people are *just like you*. Some have the same background as you do, perhaps even the same education. In fact, some may have been your neighbors at one point. But through a sad turn of events—whether due to domestic violence, loss of one or more incomes, or a personal tragedy—they are homeless. And many times, these people are able to receive the care and support they need with the help of other caring individuals. This year's Stand Down for the Homeless was one such event where caring individuals and corporate partners helped their less fortunate neighbors.

Every year in October, the Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition sponsors the Stand Down for the Homeless event at Cashman Field. This event involves over 50 different service providers, government agencies, and religious organizations with one common goal: serving the homeless and offering hope. This

was the sixth annual event.

"Stand Down" is a military term used when troops are brought in from battle, given a respite from their duties and are allowed to stand down for a few days rest. The Las Vegas Stand Down is the largest of over 75 that are held throughout the United States.

Co-sponsored by local businesses, government agencies and non-profit organizations, the event brings over 400 volunteers, which provide:

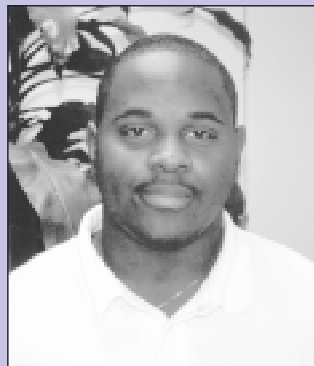
- a temporary courts system to nullify warrants and assist with legal issues

- health screenings and referrals
- a vaccine clinic
- a children's area with games and activities
- hair cuts provided by Super Cuts
- a job fair
- over 50 other booths offering services, information and referrals

Each client was given a punch card to receive a goody bag, blanket, lunch and a referral to the temporary courts system. This year's event is over, and already plans are being

Stand Down
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My Day at the Homeless Stand Down



James Allen
PAL Intern
Neighborhood Services

I've never had a chance to experience homelessness, and I don't think I ever want to. But I had a chance to help out my homeless neighbors at the Stand Down for the Homeless.

I volunteered in the interview area, guiding and helping people around. I helped show clients around and make them familiar with the different areas so they felt more at ease. I had a chance to talk to some homeless individuals, and I have to say that I think I made a few friends.

This experience really brought me down to reality, now I think about all those times I got mad at my parents for not buying me the nice clothes and expensive things that all my friends seemed to have. I'm only seventeen, and I must admit now that I don't know everything like I used to think I did.

What I really should be thankful for is that I have good health and that I'm still alive. I have my family, a home, and food every day. But there are people out there that wish they had something to keep them warm, or a roof over their heads and a good hot meal.

I never really thought about what homeless people go through until I saw it with my own eyes. And now, I know that you can never judge a person until you've walked in their shoes.

Grants Update

The Public/Private Partnership:

The City of Las Vegas, Wells Fargo Bank, and the Federal Government

Nevada's first business incubator, the Las Vegas Business Incubator Center, is unique because it was financed by a public/private partnership. The building was built with \$1,313,913 of HUD Community Development Block Grant funds and \$492,008 from the Economic Development Administration, a division of the U.S. Department of Commerce. In addition, Wells Fargo Bank provided a \$300,000 grant, which financed the furniture, telephone system, training center, and most of the equipment.

The City provided the computer hardware and software and provide staff to manage and operate the program. Tenants are also provided reception services, a conference room, copy and fax machines, laser printer, private storage, and business training and counseling.

Recently the City added the concept of the "Industrial" Incubator Program, which helps businesses that do not need a full-time business. Clients receive a private storage area for equipment and supplies, a telephone answering service as well as mail and delivery. They also can use the copy machine, send and receive local faxes, and use the conference room and training center.

The latest program to be developed is called the "Incubator Without Walls". This program is for persons who want to continue to have their offices in their homes, but who need the benefits of the support ser-



Sam Culotta, vice-president of Community Development for Wells Fargo and Las Vegas Business Center Manager Peggy Proestos enjoy a tour of the business center.

vices. Tenants can use the shared facilities, hang their licenses in the Incubator, reserve the conference room or training center to meet clients in a professional center.

Staff and incubator tenants have developed several job-oriented workshops for residents that will be conducted every two months to help residents improve jobs skills, obtain jobs, or

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Spotlight on: The CDRB

The Community Development Recommending Board, which is commonly referred to as the CDRB, is a committee consisting of 27 members of the local community appointed by the City Council to review and score the applications from local non-profit agencies seeking HOME, HOPWA and CDBG federal grant funding. The CDRB committee - which consists of business owners, bankers, teachers, social workers, ministers and citizens at large meets for more than 40 hours including two Saturday site visits and listens to more than 80 agency presentations. After the presentations are made the committee has the difficult assignment of choosing the most deserving agencies for funding. The application process begins in early October and continues thru February. The committee typically begins meeting in mid January and concludes in February.

Grants Update

President Clinton signs best HUD Budget in a decade

WASHINGTON - President Clinton signed the Department of Housing and Urban Development's appropriations bill into law, giving HUD its best budget in a decade and enacting landmark measures that transform public housing, create housing assistance vouchers for 90,000 families, and enable more families to get FHA mortgages to become homeowners.

In addition, the \$24.5 billion budget bill meets the President's request for increased funding for key HUD programs including: public housing revitalization and capital improvements, Community Development Block Grants, homeless assistance, combating housing discrimination, and the Youthbuild job training program.

The bill also allows HUD to create a new program of home ownership vouchers requested by the Presi-

dent and authorizes HUD to develop a home rehabilitation demonstration program proposed by Congressman Joseph Kennedy of Massachusetts.

President Clinton said: "This Act also makes landmark housing reform a reality. This bipartisan bill will allow more economic integration and deconcentration in our nation's public housing; encourage and reward work; provide protections for those most in need; and put the Nation back into the housing business with the first new housing vouchers in five years."

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo said: "This bill is a historic victory for President Clinton and the Democrats who stood firm in support of his policies to transform public housing, expand the supply of affordable housing and increase home

ownership. But far more importantly, this legislation is a victory for America's people and communities in greatest need, because it brings them new opportunities to build better futures."

The legislation will:

- Transform public housing by reducing segregation by race and income, encouraging and rewarding work, bringing more working families into public housing, and increasing the availability of subsidized housing for very poor



*HUD Secretary
Andrew Cuomo*

**Budget continued
on page 6**

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ing loan funds and fund other community projects. The City of Las Vegas anticipates the receipt of over \$3.9 Million in FY1999-2000 funds, which maintains current funding levels.

Homeless Assistance. HUD's FY 1999 budget contains \$975 million to fight homelessness, an increase of more than 17 percent over FY 1998 enacted funding of \$823 million. HUD's homeless assistance funds go into local communities that

establish "Continuum of Care" strategies, coordinated community responses that focus on ensuring that homeless persons move from homelessness into jobs and permanent housing. Continuum of Care ensures that the specific needs of all homeless persons are served, including those living with mental illness, those in need of substance abuse treatment, and those in need of job skills. To date, a Continuum of Care award to the community has not

been announced.

Fair Housing. HUD's FY 1999 budget for Fair Housing activities is up 33 percent from last year, jumping to \$40 million from the FY 1998 total of \$30 million. For Southern Nevada, the Nevada Fair Housing Center \$204,679 to conduct private enforcement activities including complaint intake, referral, testing, and conciliation of fair housing claims.

Grants Update

A word from our local HUD office....

Hello,

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is entering a new era. This new era will engage our clients in a more collaborative, interactive manner than ever before. We will be faster, more flexible, innovative, creative and productive.

We know that the future depends on keeping current customers loyal while continually bringing new ones into the HUD family. Our challenge will be to develop unique ways to reach specialized community requirements with a mix of programs and services that the department offers. To do this the department has undertaken a monumental change in its operations.

HUD has divided the organization into public trust officers who will ensure that the department, its partners and recipients live up to the demands that the public and the law requires.

Another part of the new HUD is to utilize community builders who will engage our customers collaboratively and interactively to achieve what our communities most value. Community builders will be the window to HUD, assisting clients throughout the maze of programs in an effort to "build better communities."

Leslie Ciski, Roy Porter, Tony Ramirez, Bernie Yergeau, Debra Bradshaw, and Paul Pradia are the new members of the Community Builder Team assigned to Southern Nevada.

The following are the six strategic objectives that the department has adopted to help guide us into the new millennium:

- Fighting Fair Housing
- Increasing Affordable Housing and Homeownership
- Reducing Homelessness
- Promoting Jobs and Economic



Opportunities

- Empowering People and Communities
- Restoring Public Trust

These are part of a strategic vision that we hope will culminate in the continuous improvement of the delivery of our service. For further information on the Nevada State Office please visit our web site at <http://hudweb.hud.gov>.

*Thank you,
Kenneth J. LoBene
State Coordinator
Senior Community Builder*

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- families.
- Create housing assistance vouchers for 90,000 more families with low and moderate incomes though the Section 8 program to enable them to rent privately owned apartments.
- Enable more families to qualify for FHA mortgages by raising the limit on home mortgages insured by the FHA (Federal Housing Administration).
- Revitalize and improve public housing developments with sub-

- stantial increases in two programs.
- Increase funding for Community Development Block Grants from \$4.675 billion last year to \$4.75 billion this year - a \$75 million expansion of the program.
- Increase funding for homeless assistance from \$823 million last year to \$975 million this year - an 18 percent increase.
- Expand fair housing programs that reduce housing discrimination.
- Expand the Youthbuild Program, which provides on-site training in construction skills, along with

- academic training, to unemployed high school drop-out ages 16 to 24.
- Create home ownership voucher program that will allow as many as 50,000 families to use their Section 8 rental assistance vouchers to become first-time home buyers.
- Authorize HUD to develop a home rehabilitation demonstration program under which HUD will provide grants to subsidize interest on loans for home rehabilitation in 10 communities.

Neighborhood News

Building homes, Building lives

Habitat for Humanity International is a non-profit organization that provides home ownership opportunities for low-income families with the help of people and companies donating their time, materials and money.

The homes are built and then sold at no profit and with no interest to qualified working families. Homeowner families represent the third group for whom all efforts focus.

The simple, yet effective concept of Habitat for Humanity found an interesting start. Millard Fuller became a millionaire at an early age and realized that while his net worth was growing, the quality of his family life was diminishing. Millard suggested to his wife Linda that they give the money away, and surprisingly, she agreed. The projects they launched for housing evolved into the partnership process used today.

The process appeals to contributors, who see the families become co-participants in positive results. Volunteers come from all walks of life and see the impact of applying their skills in order to help a family. Many people find that they learn new skills in the process, and perhaps more importantly, learn about others in our community. As one volunteer explains, "This is a stress reliever for me because it is so different from my day-to-day job. Plus, you meet some great people. I think I have grown as a result."

"We are always looking for potential homeowners," shares Jim Evans, executive director for the Las Vegas

affiliate. "Families who meet the low income guidelines and have a fair record of employment and credit history should give us a call. Not everyone can qualify, but you never know unless you ask."

The coming year promises to be an exciting one as Habitat for Humanity lines up partners for eight homes. The growth of Habitat for Humanity locally mirrors the fast-paced growth of Las Vegas. Eight years ago a group of caring citizens worked to form the Las Vegas affiliate of Habitat for Humanity, and did so in a record eight months. The number of homes built by the group places it in the top third of all affiliates in terms of building activities.

And as the valley has shown, there are challenges that come with rapid growth.



(Top) Volunteers work on a Habitat for Humanity Home. (Right) Steve Linder, executive director for Habitat for Humanity, gives Debbie Fuquay the keys to her new home.



The need for generous givers, willing volunteers and hardworking homeowners is great. One focus in the future will be to rehab existing homes in addition to building new ones, so even more help is needed. If you are interested in being a partner with Habitat for Humanity, call the office at 638-6477.

Contributing writers Cynthia Sell and Vince Addamo

In Brief

Citibank sponsors much-needed training course

Hats off to Citibank for sponsoring a three-day training course conducted by the National Development Council, the nation's leading provider of development training and technical assistance.

Through its Community Development Institute program, Citibank provided a training course from September 30 through October 2, 1998, entitled *Introduction to Multifamily Housing Development Finance* free of charge to community development practitioners within non-profit, government, private and civic sectors in Nevada.

Neighborhood Services' Neighborhood Development Division would like to extend its gratitude to Citibank for its commitment to enhancing the community development environment in Southern Nevada and increasing the stock of affordable housing in Las Vegas.

Thank you Citibank!

New Office Building adds space for Latin Chamber of Commerce

Located on South Sixth Street, the Latin Chamber of Commerce has access to limited office space. Furthermore, because of the downtown location, many of the Latin Chamber's constituents residing in East Las Vegas have difficulty in accessing the services the Latin Chamber provides.

Soon, this problem will be alleviated. Realizing that the office space shortage was becoming a pervasive problem, Councilman Gary Reese worked with staff of the Neighborhood Services Department to find a piece of land suitable for an office building. The result is a collaboration with Nevada HAND, a local non-profit which is developing a housing development for seniors on the corner of 13th and Stewart. Because Nevada HAND did not need the entire piece of land it had acquired, Nevada HAND welcomed the idea of reserving a portion of the property for a Latin Chamber of Commerce Office Building. Through the reservation of nearly half of an acre of land, the Latin Chamber of Commerce will be able to break ground on a 4,500 square foot office building. When completed, the Latin Chamber will be able to expand its capacity and the critical services it provides for the Latino community.

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a plaza will be built in the middle of the park to accommodate a covered ramada, benches, and barbecues.

An art project sponsored by the Arts Commission as part of their Art in Public Places Program will be the focal point of the totally renovated park.

Designed by local artists and local architects, the project will feature a 10-foot high structure covered with art and story boards depicting the life of Lubertha Johnson, a Las Vegas educator, civil rights activist and the park's namesake.

The artists have also designed pedestrian entry paths to the park highlighted by sculptured benches that will serve as works of art as well as sitting areas.

With construction scheduled to begin the first quarter of 1999 and estimated to be completed by the winter of 1999, the residents will once again have a neighborhood park they can enjoy and be proud of.

Stand Down - continued from page 3

formulated on how to improve it for next year.

It's nice to know that in this hectic life we lead, people can take time out to care for those who are less fortunate, but not less deserving, than they are. And the Las Vegas community continues to show its warmth and generosity at this event every year. For more information about the Stand Down for the Homeless, please call Brian Brooks at (702) 631-8816.

Workshops to offer training to residents

The Las Vegas Business Incubator Center will hold a series of free workshops for area residents and businesses in the Training Center, Las Vegas Business Center, 1951 Stella Lake Street, Suite 30 (Southwest corner of Martin Luther King and Lake Mead Boulevards, approximately 300 yards west of the McDonalds. Look for the building with the bright yellow, triangle-shaped metal window awnings.)

For reservations, call Shirley or Peggy at 638-6371.

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Seminars to Help You Get A Job or a Better Job

- 9:30 - 10:30 A.M. "Dress for Success for Men to Get That Job"
by Blake Porter, True Power, Inc. and Basil Clay, International College Funding
- 10:30 - 12:00 Noon "Basic Things To Know About Computers"
by Mir Ali, Adam Management Consulting
- 1:30 - 2:30 P.M. "Legal Tips for the Average Person"
by Marqueta Johnson, Law Office of Marqueta Johnson
- 2:30 - 3:30 P.M. "Preparing Yourself for the 1998 Tax Season"
by Martin Armstrong and Vanessa Smith, The Tax Wizards
- 3:30 - 4:30 P.M. "Dress for Success to Get That Job"
by Janis Carter, On Time Productions

Wednesday, January 20, 1999

- 9:30 - 10:30 A.M. "Do It Yourself Electrical & Air Conditioning Tips for That Old House"
by Calvin Hooks, Hooks Electric
- 10:30 - 11:30 A.M. "How to Become an American Citizen"
Teshager Kelkay, Abesha Business Center

Seminars for Small Business

- 1:00 - 2:00 P.M. "Tips from Your Attorney"
- 2:00 - 3:00 P.M. "Tips from Your Accountant"
- 3:00 - 4:00 P.M. "The Most Important Marketing Tip: Location, Location, Location"

Thursday, January 21, 1999

Seminars for Small Business

- 9:30 - 10:30 A.M. "The Elements of a Good Business Plan"
- 10:30 - 11:30 A.M. "Tips from Your Banker"

Incubator - continued from page 4

start their own businesses. The next series of workshops is scheduled to be held the first week in January.

"We need to increase and develop business development programs for our neighborhoods, because the U. S. Small Business Administration ("SBA") estimates that only 20% of all new businesses survive the first five years," says Councilman Gary Reese. "That is why the City established the Incubator program: to provide a safe, supportive environment to increase a business' survival rate." The Incubator program is located in the Las Vegas Business Center in the City's Enterprise Park on the southwest corner of Martin Luther King and Lake Mead Boulevards.

SBA will open the state's first Business Information Center in the Business Center in January, 1999. The "BIC" will provide computer software, hardware and staff to help persons who want to start a business, or businesses which need counseling and technical assistance. The City's Incubator is the primary resource for assistance for area small businesses. For more information about the workshops or the Incubator, call Shirley or Peggy at 638-6371.

Planning Ahead...

- CDBG week is coming in April! We'll have details on the city's plans for celebrating this important week!
- We'll keep you updated on the city's revitalization efforts
- What's happening in downtown Las Vegas? We'll keep you informed!

Happy Holidays!

from the

Neighborhood Development Division



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